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[Christie opposes conversion therapy but will he sign a ban into law?](#)



Posted by

[CNN's Kevin Liptak](#)

(CNN) - A spokeswoman for Republican Gov. Chris Christie said Thursday that he "does not believe in conversion therapy" for homosexuals, but did not say whether the New Jersey governor plans to support a ban on the practice that's under consideration by state lawmakers.

"There is no mistaking his point of view on this when you look at his own prior statements where he makes clear that people's sexual orientation is determined at birth," Maria Comella, his spokeswoman, said.

Her comments come a day after Christie sparked headlines for saying he hadn't made up his mind on whether to sign the ban into law. And his Democratic challenger in the November's election wasted no time Thursday in attacking Christie for his lack of a stance on the issue.

"I'm of two minds just on this stuff in general," Christie was quoted by the Star-Ledger as saying at a press conference Wednesday. "Number one, I think there should be a lot of deference given to parents on raising their children. I don't – this is a general philosophy, not to his bill – generally philosophically, on bills that restrict parents' ability to make decisions on how to care for their children, I'm generally a skeptic of those bills. Now, there can always be exceptions to those rules and this bill may be one of them.

The paper reported Christie saying he never reads bills before they hit his desk for approval.

The bill – which was approved by a state Senate committee on Monday – would make it illegal for a professional counselor to "engage in sexual orientation change efforts with a person under 18." Therapy methods vary, but are often times associated with fundamentalist Christian groups who oppose homosexuality. Shock therapy is used in some instances.

Major medical groups, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association, oppose therapies that aim to treat homosexuality as a mental disorder.

Christie's rival in the election, state Sen. Barbara Buono, called Christie's hesitance at taking a position on the measure "disgusting."

"His intolerance has no place in our state," Buono said on a conference call, adding later: "The governor said he doesn't know much about gay conversion therapy. But I don't know how much more you need to know."

His remarks are simply a pattern of cowing to national Republicans, Buono alleged.

"I would have to assume that's guiding his judgment in this case. He's certainly being consistent anyway," she said.

Polls show Christie leading Buono by large margins, months ahead of November's vote.

Last February, Christie vetoed a bill that would have allowed same-sex couples to wed, saying the issue should be decided by voters rather than lawmakers.

On Wednesday, Christie reaffirmed his personal opposition to same-sex marriage, according to the Star-Ledger. He was asked whether Sen. Rob Portman's recent endorsement of same-sex marriage would force him to rethink his position.

"As far as how it affects my view, no," Christie said. "Because that question implies that somehow this is a political judgment and for me it's not."

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tyrammstein

it is amazing to me that in this country people are allowed to use religion to justify hate, and ignorance. before the civil war preaches across the country used biblical passages to justify slavery. over a hundred years later, folks still use the bible and their religion to justify gay conversion citing that gays are perverse and worse. as for christy he is trying to walk a fine line between the GOP right wing and wanting to be a presidential candidate. still he is showing greta ignrance on the issue and seems unwilling to get educated. shame

March 21, 2013 06:04 pm at 6:04 pm |

WhatisGoingOn

Liberal counselors should be banned from further confusing confused kids. Gay couples should also be banned from adopting kids.

March 21, 2013 06:13 pm at 6:13 pm |

BD70

Conversion therapy does not work. These people are who they are....try looking into reincarnation. Genetics...this whole thing is way too complex for simple conversion therapy. Christie needs to do some research. A lot of it.

March 21, 2013 06:13 pm at 6:13 pm |

Ove Sorensen

Is he beginning to lose it? This is what Bachman's crazy husband does. Wake up Governor.

March 21, 2013 06:19 pm at 6:19 pm |

abbydelabbey

Gov. Christie (and others), listen to what the American Psychological Association says, not the wing-nuts and fanatics. FYI: it's biological, not pathological to be gay - so, it's not pathological it's not a "disease" to be cured ...

March 21, 2013 06:22 pm at 6:22 pm |

Gurgyl

These guys are producing more kids. Population is 230 million to 310 millions. It is all farce.

March 21, 2013 06:23 pm at 6:23 pm |

AJ

"Why in the hell does government have to take a stand on the validity or invalidity of this 'therapy'"? – cnnmembuh

Well cnnmembuh, because the government should take an interest when it's citizens are harmed by a therapy. No different than when a bad medicine makes it out and cause cancer, or suicide or whatever. A government should have an interest in not allowing bad medicine that damages it's people.

March 21, 2013 06:23 pm at 6:23 pm |

Cathy CA

While I'm opposed personally to SOCE, and I think it could do terrible harm to a child, it is not a good idea to start regulating therapies....where does it end? Plus, it is not the state regulated therapists doing SOCE (statistically), it is the Christian/Religious counselors for the most part and any legislation won't affect them.

March 21, 2013 06:30 pm at 6:30 pm |

Clarke

All straight people should under go conversion therapy to become gay. Let people live there own lives and let parents take care of there children. The politicians and government need to let us all be. Just plain shameful!

March 21, 2013 06:57 pm at 6:57 pm |

Jim

We've accepted gay into our society, so what is next bestiality or pedophilia? C'mon libs! Sure you have a next step in this you'll force try to pitch as normal behavior. Sickos...

March 21, 2013 07:07 pm at 7:07 pm |

Gmclenuth

Christie acknowledges that being gay is a gene factor in which the individual has no choice over, so he's hesitating about banning a therapy that can only worsen one's problem of coping. Not the Christie I know as my Governor. He usually has no hesitation about following his beliefs. I hope this is not politically motivated.

March 21, 2013 07:09 pm at 7:09 pm |

Nare

Smart move, politically. Without people to demonize, Republicans have got nothing.

March 21, 2013 07:23 pm at 7:23 pm |

Mike

Gay conversion therapy??? Did the bible thumpers think this one up?

March 21, 2013 07:58 pm at 7:58 pm |

John the Historian

This mob boss is nothing for the party of the Christian Right and the military-industrial complex and the corporate elite. Schism for the Republican party.

March 21, 2013 07:59 pm at 7:59 pm |

geggyg

@ cnnmembuh

If adults make their own decision to put themselves through conversion therapy that is for them to decide .

The bills they are talking about are adults forcing children to go through so called conversion therapy .

In many areas Govts have a duty to help protect children from adults even at times from abusive parents. Do you think the Govt should repeal all their child protection laws relating to parents and their children , because of an ideological reasons of parental freedom to raise their children anyway they want, would you let parents beat their children frequently breaking bone, keeping them in cages If they have a disability , not feeding the children until they suffer from malnutrition, would you allow atheist parents to use conversion therapy on children who decided to believe in god because they want their children to be good atheists. Performing gay conversion therapy especially on children is physical and physcolgical abuse.

March 21, 2013 08:14 pm at 8:14 pm |

g

will cheny or portman had their gay family members over to bachmamms husband

March 21, 2013 08:41 pm at 8:41 pm |

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